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AUTHOR	Peebles, James M.
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ABSTRACT

A procedure for evaluating principals was developed over a period of approximately two years at Wellesley, Massachusetts. First, position descriptions were prepared. Then, several meetings were held with all administrators including department heads. Following these general workshops, eight administrators volunteered for a week's workshop during the summer. Through developing their own position descriptions, these administrators became qualified to conduct interviews with administrative personnel. The Wellesley evaluation program provides for (1) sufficient contact with the individual in his usual working area so that the evaluator feels competent to discuss the evaluatee's performance, (2) at least two formal conferences a year and, (3) written reports of all formal conferences to the superintendent of schools. The conference includes (1) a discussion of long- and short-range objectives agreed upon by both the evaluator and the evaluatee, (2) a discussion of the administrator's overall performance as outlined in the administrator's position description, (3) a discussion of the evaluatee's performance in terms of responsibilities common to all administrators, and (4) a written narrative report by the evaluator. (Author)

NASSP Annual Convention

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Formal Procedures for Evaluating Principals

by James M. Peebles

The evaluation of an administrator has several purposes. It should improve instruction and communication and should lead to better planning and the realization of worthwhile goals. The mechanics of the program to conduct such an evaluation may vary but essential to any program is personal contact. Some are based on the objectives and goals which have been developed cooperatively by the administrator and his immediate superior. Following the development of the goals and objectives a formal conference is held by the evaluatee and evaluator. Then a narrative report is written by the evaluator and submitted to the evaluatee. Other evaluation programs are quite the opposite. For example, in the evaluation procedure in Arlington County, Virginia, the burden of assessment of performance and development of plans for improvement are primarily on the evaluatee. The evaluatee's immediate superior is more of a counselor and a reactor rather than an evaluator.

Some other examples. The North East Independent School District in San Antonio, Texas, is organized with a check list of eighty-five items under such headings as Personal Responsibilities with topics such as "Am I enthusiastic about my work?" "Do I attend and contribute to professional meetings?" Administrative and Professional Responsibilities contains twenty-eight

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items wherein answers are sought for "To What Extent: Do I provide assistance toward helping teachers improve? Am I receptive to new ideas? Do I attempt to see the over-all total picture? Am I punctual to my office, at meetings, with reports? Do I evaluate teachers' methods of grading students?"

Another topic heading is Community Responsibilities - to what extent: "Am I professionally ethical in all relationships? Do I keep the community informed concerning the school program?" Management of Facilities with such questions as to what extent is my office neat and attractive? Do I encourage students to show school pride in their buildings and campus? Am I safety conscious about the facilities? Instructional Supervision - to what extent: Do I regularly visit classrooms? Do I assist teachers in evaluating their methods and materials? Do I assist teachers in developing good skills and study habits for their pupils? Administrator and Student Relationships: To what extent do I aid students in developing responsibility for their conduct? Do I understand and respect students as individuals? Physical Traits- To what extent: Is my personal appearance neat and appropriate. Do I use correct English? Emotional Traits - to what extent am I open-minded, happy and tolerant in my outlook on life? Am I able to work effectively with others? Am I patient? Staff Relationships- to what extent does my staff feel free to approach me on any matters of concern? Do I admonish

privately those staff members whose performance is not acceptable.

This evaluation instrument provides space for self evaluation and space for the immediate supervisor's ratings. The evaluation terms used are C Commendable - Exceeds the standards of North East School District A Acceptable - meets the standards of North East School District - I Need improvement - Improvement is needed in order to meet the standards of North East School District - U Unsatisfactory - Fails to meet the standards of the District to a satisfactory degree. N/A not applicable or insufficient knowledge on which to evaluate. The form finally has space for both the signature of the administrator and his immediate supervisor.

In both Pueblo, California and Tulsa, Oklahoma a team of administrators is organized to conduct the evaluation. This evaluation takes an entire day from 8 to 4:30 P. M. The principal is expected to make advance preparations for the visit by completing a "Principal's Performance Appraisal" to rehearse him for the interviews and help him select supportive exhibits related to the items on the form, which will be used by the Administrative Director in evaluating him. The principal is required to send a letter to six elected P. T. A. officers (and a limited number of other patrons if he so desires) inviting them to meet the visiting team at a designated time and place on the visitation day. He must also notify all members of the faculty grievance committee and all teacher association delegates in his building to select

from among their number a committee of not more than five to meet with the team. He may also appoint two additional faculty members to this committee. Within one week after the visit the Administrative Director must complete the Principal's Performance Appraisal Record, schedule a conference with the principal to discuss the report and have the principal sign the form. (If the principal disagrees with the report he may request a Review Committee be appointed to restudy the approval.)

The Mt Diablo Unified School District, California involves students with a survey. The student is asked the following - We hope that _____ (school) is a wonderful place for you to learn. We know that you have some special ideas about our school and perhaps ways in which we can make it an even better place to learn.

1. Please list or describe below the things you like about _____ (school).

2. Please list or describe below ways in which we can make _____ (school) a better place.

3. Please write below any other ideas you may have about _____ (school). The survey is anonymous.

The following letter is sent to parents. "We hope that the educational program offered at _____ (school) is adequate and satisfying for your child. In order to be more fully informed about your attitude, we would like your written reaction to the general areas below:

1. Instructional Program (Curriculum scheduling, teaching, etc.)

2. Student relations (counseling and guidance, student activities, recreation programs, etc.)

3. Community relations (parent organization, articulation programs, parent involvement, etc.)

4. General administration of the school.

There is also a teacher survey wherein the teacher is asked to list or describe ways in which the principal has provided leadership in each of the following areas of the school. List or describe ways in which your principal might improve his leadership in the respective areas. Two columns are provided - one entitled "Strengths", the other 'Ways to Improve." These eight areas are listed: The instructional program, staff relations, plant management, business affairs and other comments. As in the case of the student survey, both the parent and teacher surveys are also anonymous.

I should like to conclude my report by describing the Wellesley, Massachusetts procedure. The procedure was developed over a period of approximately two years. The first step was that of preparing position descriptions. The Hay Assocaites from Philadelphia were engaged as consultants. Several meetings were held with all administrators. The position descriptions focused on the following areas <u>Accountability Objectives</u>,

Dimensions of the position, which includes size of school and staff plus non-professional staff and student teachers. The annual budget and length of work year also fall into this category. Nature and Scope of the Position, Horizontal and Vertical Coordination which describes the personnel with whom the principal works such as central office, staff members, students, parents, services to total school system and the community, budgeting, innovative projects, and general responsibilities. The final category is that of Principal Accountabilities.

When this meeting breaks into smaller groups I will be happy to show you copies of some of the position descriptions should you be interested. Following the general workshops involving all administrators six or eight volunteered for further training scheduled for a week during the summer. These people did their own descriptions with the assistance of the consultants and then were responsible for conducting interviews with administrative personnel. These interviews usually lasted for as long as three hours. Following the interviews the trained interviewers wrote the various position descriptions. A formal program of evaluation was initiated after the completion of these descriptions. To be successful there must be a mutual understanding and agreement between the evaluator and the evaluatee concerning the latter's performance and the effect it has on the achievement of his and the school system's goals.

Such an understanding can only be reached if there are regular contacts between the twoparties. The Wellesley program provides for the following:

1. Sufficient contact with the individual in his usual working area so that the evaluator feels competent to discuss the evaluatee's performance.

2. At least one formal conference a year.

3. Written reports to the superintendent of schools of all formal conferences . Included in the conference may be:

1. A discussion of objectives both short and long-range which are agreed upon by both the evaluator and the evaluatee.

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Human relations

There should be a written narrative-type report prepared by the evaluator for each conference. It should be discussed with the evaluatee and a copy given to him for his own records. A copy signed by the evaluator and evaluatee will also be given to the superintendent of schools.

Although the conference will normally be held with only the administrator and his immediate superior present, it is possible for either party to request that the superintendent of schools be present.

NOTE If time permits read my personal evaluation to the group

An excellent reference on this topic is the Educational Research Service Circular No. 6 1971. It can be obtained from the Educational Research Service American Association of School Administrators, 1801 North Moore St., Arlington, Virginia, 22209.

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